



AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

Housing: Question on Telephone Service (H-11)

FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL USES OF DATA ABOUT TELEPHONE SERVICE

- The Federal Communications Commission uses these data to measure the extent of universal access to telephone service.
- The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) uses these data as a measure of social isolation, one of the factors cited by the Older Americans Act as a "source of greatest social need."
- HHS also uses these data to determine the allocation of funds from states to eligible entities and to determine low-income housing needs.
- Telephone companies use these data to locate potential areas for expanding their services.
- State and local governments, faith-based and other non-profit organizations, and businesses use these data to plan, budget, and pay benefits.

QUESTION AS IT APPEARS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

11 Is there telephone service available in this house, apartment, or mobile home from which you can both make and receive calls?

☐ Yes

☐ No

EXAMPLES OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TELEPHONE SERVICE DATA

- Communications Act of 1934, as amended (Telecommunications Act of 1996)
- Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended
- Community Services Block Grant Act

[<www.census.gov/acs/www>](http://www.census.gov/acs/www)

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Helping You Make Informed Decisions



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HISTORY OF THE TELEPHONE SERVICE QUESTION

- The question on telephone service has been asked since 1980.
- The question also was asked on the Census 2000 long-form questionnaire.

WHY WE ASK IT THIS WAY

The lack of telephone service is an important measure of social isolation. This question is included to obtain information on the extent to which people have access to telephone service. The focus of the telephone question has changed from respondents who report the mere presence of a telephone in the housing unit to respondents who now are asked if they have service available for a telephone in the unit. Asking about telephone service is needed because an individual can own a telephone and have no service to make or receive calls.

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey that collects socioeconomic and housing information and is the planned replacement for the long form in the 2010 Census.

The U.S. Census Bureau plans to conduct the ACS in every county, American Indian and Alaska Native Area, Hawaiian Home Land, and in Puerto Rico, once it is fully implemented, pending Congressional funding. The ACS has been tested across the country since 1996.

HOW CAN I SEE THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY ?

The information collected from these tests is published on the Census Bureau's Web site at:

<www.census.gov/acs/www>

and American FactFinder at:

<<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

For more information call, e-mail, or visit our Web site:

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<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www>>

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